United Nations A/C.1/49/PV.16

General Assembly

Official Records

First Committee

16th Meeting

Wednesday, 9 November 1994, 3 p.m.

New York

Chairman: Mr. Valencia Rodriguez . . . . . (Ecuador)

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

Agenda items 53-66, 68-72 and 153 *(continued)*

Consideration of draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman (*interpretation from Spanish*): The first speaker this afternoon is the representative of Germany, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.21.

Mr. Hoffmann (Germany): It is my privilege today to introduce, on behalf of 37 sponsors, draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.21, entitled "Implementation of the guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-building measures". This draft resolution represents a traditional subject of the First Committee, which has been pursued by Germany and by many of the other sponsors for many years.

In 1988, the Disarmament Commission adopted a set of guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-building measures and for the implementation of such measures on a global or regional level. Since then, the General Assembly has several times endorsed those guidelines and has encouraged Member States to implement them. Successive past resolutions on this issue were modified in order to reflect recent political developments, taking into account the accumulation of relevant experience in this field.

In 1988, some delegations requested that criteria and characteristics of a regional approach to confidence-building measures should be spelled out in greater detail. This task has now been carried out in the context of the guidelines and recommendations for regional approaches to disarmament within the context of global security, adopted by the Disarmament Commission in 1993. Therefore, it is fair to state that the international community now possesses a whole set of guidelines and recommendations on confidence-building measures, very recently reviewed and endorsed by the international community itself.

Today, confidence-building measures are widely accepted as a useful means in the context of maintaining and enhancing international and regional peace and security. Twenty years ago, confidence-building measures were implemented mostly to ease political and military tensions and thus to contribute to a better relationship between States and between groups of States. Since then, confidence-building measures have become part of arms-control and disarmament agreements, and even of arrangements related to non-security issues. Furthermore, in recent years confidence-building measures have been developed as an instrument to contribute to conflict prevention and to peacemaking and peace-building activities.

Draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.21 is intended to cover the whole spectrum of the current concept and implementation of confidence-building measures. Taking this into account, paragraph 7 suggests the inclusion in the provisional agenda of the fifty-first session an item entitled "Confidence-building measures" in order to give Member States an opportunity to raise all relevant issues in this context.

The sponsors of this draft resolution are convinced that, in view of the world-wide support for and

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implementation of confidence-building measures, draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.21 can be adopted without a vote, as has been the case for resolutions on this issue in previous years.

The Chairman *(interpretation from Spanish):* The next speaker is the representative of Egypt, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.11.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.11, entitled "The threat of nuclear armament in the Middle East", which is sponsored by the delegations of Indonesia, Jordan, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Egypt.

The draft resolution submitted this year under agenda item 65 constitutes a dramatic departure from the texts of previous years, both in form and in substance. Its sole objective is to strengthen the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in the regional context of the Middle East. For decades this sensitive region of the world has been the theatre of devastating armed conflicts, which have posed a severe and constant threat to international peace and security. With the advent of the recent positive political developments in the Middle East as a result of the ongoing peace process, it is ever more pressing to safeguard the region from the ominous consequences associated with the introduction of nuclear weapons and the perils of a future nuclear-arms race. The total elimination of this threat would no doubt contribute to consolidating the peace process and increasing its momentum. This objective, as is clear from the draft resolution, cannot be achieved unless all States of the region undertake equal obligations and equal responsibilities, and enjoy equal rights, as stipulated in the NPT. The key is total equality across the board.

I shall turn now to a most important feature of the draft resolution. Let me start by saying that resolutions adopted in past years were considered by many delegations as imbalanced, because they focused on one State. Many considered that they could not support the "singling out" feature in those resolutions. Fortunately, recent positive developments in the Middle East have contributed to creating a climate of confidence and cooperation, and there is no need for any further confrontation.

Draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.11 addresses all — I repeat, all — States of the region not parties to the NPT in a precise and factual manner, on the basis of their level of advancement in nuclear technology. I must note that the singling out of one State, which was a feature of previous resolutions, has been eliminated. It has been dropped. Those who are reluctant to extend their support to A/C.1/49/L.11 are, in point of fact, singling out the Middle East as a region. They would be sending a clear message that the international community is willing to acquiesce in nuclear proliferation when it comes to the Middle East, and it is our turn now to say that this singling out cannot be accepted.

The universality of the NPT is considered to be a truly effective means of eliminating the threat of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. This is certainly just as applicable at the regional level as it is at the global level. The thrust of the draft resolution is in conformity with the importance the international community attaches to the NPT and its universality and to the necessity to further strengthen its effectiveness, in particular as we approach the 1995 Conference on the review and extension of the NPT.

Draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.11 is a non-proliferation text and nothing else. Those who support the NPT and those who advocate that we should be open-minded when the review Conference takes place next April are in duty bound to support draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.11.

The draft resolution is balanced in that it calls, in identical terms, on all non-parties to the NPT in the Middle East to accede to the Treaty and to place all their nuclear facilities under the full- scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. At the same time, the draft resolution is factual in defining the level of the non-parties' advancement in the nuclear field. It reflects today's realities: that one of the non-parties in the region has an advanced unsafeguarded nuclear programme, whereas the others have no such programmes at all.

The continuation of the current imbalance in the commitment of the States of the Middle East to the non-proliferation Treaty would constitute a real threat to the security of the region. The ongoing efforts to achieve a lasting and comprehensive peace deserve a realistic assessment of the security concerns of all the States of the region.

The sponsors of the draft resolution have legitimate expectations. They expect that the international community will apply one single yardstick where the NPT regime is concerned. We expect — and, I submit, we are entitled to receive — even-handed treatment from the international community. We expect unequivocal support for the NPT. It is totally unwarranted and discriminatory to shelter any non-party to the NPT from the need to conform to the

general and solid resolve of the international community to ensure universal adherence to the Treaty. Any exception will cast serious doubts on the sincerity of those advocating the extension of the NPT in 1995.

Before concluding, I should like to say that in formulating the text of draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.11, the sponsors have gone to great lengths to accommodate the various views expressed in the Committee on this important issue. The sponsors are open-minded and are willing to react to any meaningful proposal to make the text more acceptable. It is hoped that the draft resolution will gain wide support, reflecting the importance that Member States attach to the NPT, to its universality and to the necessity to embark on its extension. Our common objective is the total elimination of nuclear armament in the Middle East.

The Chairman *(interpretation from Spanish):* The next speaker is the representative of Chile, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.7.

Mr. Larrain (Chile) *(interpretation from Spanish):* I am honoured to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.7, on the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament, which is sponsored by Austria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Cameroon, Colombia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Finland, Iraq, Israel, New Zealand, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Ukraine, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe and Chile, countries which like my own legitimately aspire to becoming members of that body.

The draft resolution has been the subject of intensive consultations among all groups of countries currently members of the Conference on Disarmament and all countries that have applied for membership. As it examines the implementation of its own recommendations and decisions in the framework of its consideration of the annual report of the Conference on Disarmament, the General Assembly has repeatedly expressed its interest in the expansion of the sole multilateral negotiating forum in the field of disarmament. The most recent statement of its views, resolution 48/77 B, urged the Conference to reach a consensus that would result in the expansion of its membership before the start of its 1994 session.

In order to understand the tight deadline and the optimistic nature of that resolution, which was adopted by consensus in the First Committee and in the General Assembly, we need to keep in mind that the 1993 report of the Conference on Disarmament described the progress achieved and drew the attention of the General Assembly to the report of the Special Coordinator for membership, Ambassador O'Sullivan of Australia, thus giving the impression that a solution was imminent.

The 1994 report, whose overall consideration is the subject of a separate draft resolution, once again recognizes the urgent need for expansion. It notes the efforts made by the Friend of the Chair, Ambassador Lampreis of Brazil, and recognizes that it was not possible to advance beyond the situation described in the 1993 report. The Conference on Disarmament agrees to continue studying the issue with a view to arriving at a solution by the beginning of 1995, given the importance and the urgent nature of the issue as well as the need to comply with its own decision to keep its membership under periodic review.

This intention is fully consonant with the wishes expressed by the Assembly in the Final Document of its tenth special session, held from 23 May to 30 June 1978, to the effect:

> "... that the membership of the Committee" — now known as the Conference — "on Disarmament will be reviewed at regular intervals" *(Resolution S-10/2, para. 120)*.

It can be no cause for satisfaction that in the 15 years since that date, which have seen two further special sessions devoted to disarmament, and at a time when we are considering convening a fourth special session, the desired enlargement of the Conference on Disarmament has not occurred.

The profound changes on the international scene call for a decision-making process based on broad and representative participation in which the concept of democracy transcends the framework of national priorities in order to give legitimacy to the role of the international political process as a mainstay of the new order which needs to be built in the post-cold-war period. This has been interpreted in a forceful and insightful way by representatives of the many countries wishing to become members of the Conference on Disarmament. It should be noted that the Final Document of 1978, conceived during the cold-war period, recognized the limited membership of the Conference on Disarmament, but provided for different levels of participation by interested States, by non-member States and, indeed, by the public, and envisaged the holding of world conferences on disarmament.

I shall not dwell on the preambular paragraphs, the last of which reflects the aspirations of the candidate

countries to participate fully in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. I shall, however, refer to the two operative paragraphs, their content and the way in which they are interrelated.

The first welcomes the recommendations and additional statement of the Special Coordinator for membership designated by the Conference on Disarmament itself. The second urges the Conference on Disarmament to make every effort to ensure that by the beginning of 1995 there is a significant expansion in its composition as recommended by the Special Coordinator.

Allow me to give a brief explanation of the balance reflected in these two operative paragraphs. Although in the past there have been occasions when the General Assembly, the President of the Assembly or the Chairman of the First Committee became somewhat involved in the preparation of agreements on the enlargement of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament, the sponsors of this draft resolution hope that the Conference itself will now resolve this critical issue in conformity with its internal rules of procedure.

The Conference on Disarmament has indicated that it has not been possible for it to make more progress than that reflected in paragraphs 11 and 12 of its 1993 report, which includes the report of the Special Coordinator, its annexes and a further statement by the Special Coordinator. It is important to evoke this background since, as the 1994 report acknowledges, it describes the only — insufficient — progress that has been made in the consideration of the issue.

While the Conference on Disarmament should itself resolve the question, this does not mean that the General Assembly itself should abandon the practice of taking a constant interest in the harmonious functioning of all disarmament machinery.

In urging the Conference on Disarmament to resolve the thorny problem of enlargement, we have set a number of minimum parameters: the deadline that the Conference has set itself; the minimum basis established by the previous recommendations of the Special Coordinator; and a dynamic forward-looking objective of coordinating all requests for membership of the Conference on Disarmament.

In that light, I trust that the Committee will recommend this draft resolution to the General Assembly by consensus. We sincerely believe that this is a good and appropriate draft resolution which should meet the concerns of all current and aspiring members of the Conference. If we still do not achieve the desired consensus we shall be ready to continue our consultations to find alternative working that would not diminish the force of the message we wish to send.

Mr. Eliason (Denmark): I just want to take this opportunity to inform the Committee that the Danish Government, which has been an observer in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva since it was established, has now decided to apply for full membership. A few days ago the President of the Conference on Disarmament was approached about this decision. My Government hopes that the Conference on Disarmament, to which we attach considerable importance, can agree upon a significant expansion of its membership in the near future.

Mr. Than (Myanmar): My delegation would like to offer some comments and observations on draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.41, which, I understand, will be introduced later by another delegation.

For more than a quarter of a century the question of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons has engaged the attention of the international community, as it is one of the most important arms-limitation and disarmament issues. Up to now there has been little progress in this area. There are now indications that nuclear-weapon States may be willing to take this question more seriously.

Negative security assurances are political, legal and moral imperatives. The legitimate right of non-nuclear-weapon States to effective international arrangements for negative security assurances is now universally acknowledged. Moreover, there is no doubt that substantive progress in the crucial areas of negative security assurances and of drafting a comprehensive test-ban treaty can contribute towards the successful outcome of the 1995 Conference to review and extend the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

With regard to the modalities of these negative security assurances, some Member States favour the adoption by the Security Council of a resolution on both negative and positive security assurances. The overwhelming majority of Member States, including my own, favours the conclusion of a multilaterally negotiated international convention on negative and positive security assurances. A Security Council resolution on negative

security assurances would serve a useful purpose and constitute a significant step in the right direction, provided that it were crafted in such a way as to create international legal norms by which nuclear-weapon States would not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and by which non-nuclear-weapon States would remain non-nuclear, and that it dealt comprehensively and satisfactorily with the concerns of non-nuclear-weapon States.

However, such a Security Council resolution would be only a first step and an interim measure. We should continue our effort to conclude a multilaterally negotiated international convention on negative security assurances.

Draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.41, *inter alia*, recommends that the Conference on Disarmament should actively continue intensive negotiations with a view to reaching early agreement and concluding effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, taking into account the widespread support for the conclusion of an international convention and giving consideration to any other proposals designed to secure the same objective. It is a draft resolution with an important political purpose that my delegation fully shares, and it rightly focuses on the main issue of this question. My delegation is a sponsor of this draft resolution, and we hope that it will be adopted by the Committee with the overwhelming support of Member States.

The Chairman (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Mali, who will introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/49/L.30/Rev.1.

Mr. Samassekou (Mali) (*interpretation from French*): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.30/Rev.1, entitled "Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them", on behalf of the following sponsors: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

As the members of the Committee will recall, the statements made in this room on the question of small arms — by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Marrack Goulding, and by the delegation of Mali and other delegations — drew the attention of the international community to the danger that uncontrolled traffic in and accumulation of small arms represents for many countries. The draft resolution comes in this context, and it complements the previous General Assembly resolutions on so-called weapons of mass destruction. Despite their size, small arms are in the end proving more deadly, and they remain a grave threat to populations and a destabilizing factor for States at both the national and the regional levels. For this reason, illicit traffic in these arms is a matter of grave concern for the States of the Sahara-Sahelian subregion, which are making great efforts to curb such traffic. But those countries cannot deal with the situation on their own; they need the support of the international community.

That is the essence of draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.30/Rev.1. The sponsors have no doubt that it will be supported by all the members of the Committee and that it will be adopted by consensus.

Finally, I would like to say that we have taken note of the suggestions made recently by some delegations in respect of this draft resolution.

Mr. Westdal (Canada): Canada remains a strong supporter of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, and notes with satisfaction that more than 70 countries, representing all regions of the world, have sponsored this year's Netherlands text on transparency in armaments.

The Canadian delegation is pleased to make available to delegations in the First Committee a recent publication containing two reports of direct interest on the question of transparency in conventional arms.

The first report, *The Maturing Conventional Arms Transfer and Production System: Implications for Proliferation Control*, is by Keith Crouse of the York University Centre for International and Strategic Studies. It examines efforts to control the proliferation of conventional weapons in the post-cold-war era.

The second report, *United Nations Register of Conventional Arms: Options and Proposals for Enhancement and Further Development*, is by Edward Lawrence of the Monterey Institute of International Studies. Mr. Lawrence was a consultant to the Secretary-General in the preparation of the experts' reports in both 1992 and 1994. This report provides a brief history of the Register of Conventional Arms, a review of its first year of operation and an evaluation of its current status. The report also systematically evaluates various concepts that could

enhance the utility of the Register as an instrument of cooperative security.

Both reports are the result of Canada's ongoing commitment to independent research on disarmament issues. The views expressed in these reports are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent the views of the Government of Canada. Copies of the reports are available to delegations.

The Chairman *(interpretation from Spanish):* I call on the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.17.

Mr. Nasseri (Islamic Republic of Iran): I am introducing draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.17, under agenda item 64 (b), "Report of the Conference on Disarmament". As I submitted the report of the 1994 session very recently, I shall confine myself to highlighting only the main elements of the draft resolution. It is constructed essentially on the basis of last year's resolution, and it reflects in a very general way the report that has just been submitted to the Committee.

The Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, has the primary role in substantive negotiations on priority questions of disarmament. The international community therefore considers that the present international climate should give additional impetus to multilateral negotiations with a view to reaching concrete agreements. The Conference on Disarmament commenced negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty at its 1994 session. This is a significant development in the area of disarmament negotiations. It is welcomed in the fourth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, and in operative paragraph 3 the Conference on Disarmament is urged to intensify its negotiations to conclude a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty.

Furthermore, the Conference on Disarmament should receive the necessary administrative, substantive and conference support services to enable it to do what is required for the fulfilment of its objectives. This fact is acknowledged in paragraph 6 of the draft resolution, which requests the Secretary-General to continue to ensure the provision of such services.

The current international situation has given the Conference on Disarmament an opportunity to make substantive progress on priority items on its agenda. In this connection, the Conference has before it a number of urgent and important matters for negotiation. These will make heavy demands on its time and resources. It will therefore have to examine the balance of its future work when deciding which items to concentrate on.

At the same time, the Conference on Disarmament continues the ongoing review of its agenda, membership and methods of work. This is encouraged in paragraph 5 of the draft resolution. The question of expanding the membership of the Conference has been followed with keen interest, particularly in recent years, by Conference members. Expansion of the membership is now, more than ever before, a priority task in the process of securing effective and improved functioning of the body. The Conference has agreed to continue to address the question of its expansion and to make every effort to reach a solution by the beginning of its 1995 session, taking into account the importance and urgency of the issue. The formulation included in the draft resolution reflects the intention of the Conference to seek an expeditious resolution of this question.

This is, of course, a moderate draft resolution; it is not easy to encapsulate a year's work of the Conference on Disarmament in such a text. I should add that the First Committee has traditionally adopted corresponding draft resolutions by consensus. I shall conduct further consultations on the text, and I hope to be able soon to present a final version, possibly with minor modifications, for adoption by consensus.

The Chairman *(interpretation from Spanish):* I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Kheradi (Secretary of the Committee): I should like to inform members of the Committee that the following countries have become sponsors of the following draft resolutions: A/C.1/49/L.10, Jamaica; A/C.1/49/L.11, Malaysia; A/C.1/49/L.12, Jamaica and the Republic of Moldova; A/C.1/49/L.13, A/C.1/49/L.18, A/C.1/49/L.19 and A/C.1/49/L.21, Albania; A/C.1/49/L.23, Iceland and Albania; A/C.1/49/L.27, the Republic of Moldova; A/C.1/49/L.30/Rev.1, Benin, Burundi and Cameroon; A/C.1/49/L.44/Rev.1, Finland and the Netherlands.

May I request delegations that wish to become sponsors of any draft resolution, to register their names with the Secretariat. Such additional sponsorships will be read into the official records of the Committee at future meetings.

Programme of work

The Chairman *(interpretation from Spanish):* As members will recall, at an earlier meeting of the Committee I indicated that an informal list of all draft resolutions on disarmament and international security agenda items, arranged in appropriate clusters, would be distributed to the Committee. Following intensive consultations with the other officers of the Committee, I am now in a position to present to the Committee for its consideration and approval a paper setting out the Chairman's suggested programme, listing those draft resolutions under 11 different clusters.

I should like to state that the officers of the Committee undertook the task of grouping the various draft resolutions on the basis of the adopted thematic approach on disarmament and international security agenda items. In this connection, I should like to emphasize that the officers of the Committee were guided in their task by their desire to facilitate and expedite the work of the Committee with a view to ensuring the most effective and efficient utilization of the time and the conference resources available during this phase of the work of the Committee.

With regard to the programme of work and the timetable for action on draft resolutions, and on the basis of precedent, it is my intention to move, as far as possible, from one cluster to another sequentially, upon the conclusion of action on each cluster. Nevertheless, in following this procedure, we shall of course maintain the desirable degree of flexibility. Whenever I am in a position to give a precise indication of the days on which any particular cluster will be taken up, I shall advise the Committee accordingly.

In this respect, I should like to inform members that, at the request of a number of delegations, the Committee will act upon the draft resolutions contained in cluster 1, on nuclear weapons, during the last stage of its work. Thus, the Committee will begin its action on the draft resolutions contained in cluster 2.

The procedure during the decision-taking stage on each individual cluster will be that delegations will first have the opportunity to introduce any draft resolution not yet introduced, or to make a statement other than an explanation of vote which they regard as necessary with respect to the draft resolutions listed in the cluster.

Subsequently, delegations wishing to explain their positions or votes on any or all of the draft resolutions contained in a particular cluster before a decision is taken will be able to do so. Then, after the Committee has taken a decision on the draft resolutions contained in a given cluster, delegations will be able to explain their positions or votes after the decision has been taken, if they wish to do so.

In order to enable the Chairman to conduct the proceedings of the Committee in a systematic and efficient manner, I should like to urge delegations, in so far as possible, to make one statement on the draft resolutions contained in a given cluster, whether in the course of a statement or in the explanation of position or vote.

May I take it that the Committee accepts the paper prepared by the officers of the Committee, as contained in the Chairman's suggested programme, and that it is in agreement with the programme of work and the procedure I have just outlined?

It was so decided.

The Chairman *(interpretation from Spanish):* The Committee will thus proceed to the stage of taking action on draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items beginning with cluster 2.

I now wish to turn to another related matter. After due consideration, the Bureau was of the opinion that, in order to allow more time for consultations and to permit delegations obtain the requisite instructions from their respective capitals, the Committee should proceed to the action stage not on Friday, 11 November, but rather on Monday, 14 November. This may be all the more necessary in view of the fact that we have extended the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions on a number of occasions.

Accordingly, with the concurrence of the Committee, I shall begin the action phase on Monday, 14 November.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.